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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: DEPUTY CHIEF TURKISH NATIONAL POLICE ARRESTED IN
ISTANBUL

REF: A. ANKARA 779

[1](#)B. ANKARA 1425

Classified By: ConGen Istanbul Deputy Principal Officer Win Dayton; Reason 1.5 (d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) An Istanbul court last week ordered the arrest of Emin Arslan, Deputy Chief of the Turkish National Police (TNP) for Organized Crime and Kidnapping for alleged ties with "drug baron" Habib Kanat. Newly appointed Istanbul Police Chief Huseyin Capkin was reportedly behind the recent anti-narcotic operation that arrested Kanat and seized three tons of amphetamines. According to press reports, Arslan admitted his son and Kanat,s daughter were business partners, but denied any wrongdoing. Recorded conversations between Arslan and Kanat were used to further show a connection between the two men. Today,s Zaman, a daily close to self-exiled religious sect head Fethullah Gulen, went further and implicated Arslan in the Ergenekon case, linking him with a suspected hit man (see reftel A for details on this ongoing investigation and trial).

[1](#)2. (SBU) Police Chief of Eskisehir and former head of the TNP National Intelligence Unit Hanefi Avci strongly disputed the charges against Arslan. In an interview with Milliyet, a daily owned by Aydin Dogan, whose media empire is facing huge tax fines in what is perceived by many as a politically motivated case (reftel B), Avci stated Arslan was arrested for his personal connections with some of the Ergenekon suspects. According to Avci, Arslan criticized the Ergenekon process for using unlawful arrests.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: It is unclear whether Arslan,s arrest was legally justified, politically motivated, or both. The removal of an Ergenekon critic from the number two position at TNP, however, coupled with other legal actions such as this week,s arrest of the brother of Republican People,s Party (CHP) deputy Suha Okay on drug charges, will fuel fears over the police force,s growing politicization. Arslan,s replacement may also hold implications for the apparent growing Gulenist orientation of the TNP leadership. END COMMENT.
WIENER